



RECOMMENDATIONS

March 2003

8th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to the Convention on Biological Diversity

(Montreal, Canada 10-14 March 2003)

For further information, please contact:

Mr. Carl Gustaf Lundin
Head of Global Marine Programme
IUCN
28 rue Mauverney
1196 GLAND
Switzerland
E-mail: cgl@iucn.org

Mr. Charles N. Ehler
Vice Chair
WCPA-Marine
C/o National Ocean Service/NOAA
Director
International Program Office
BLDG: SSMC3 RM: 5627
1315 EAST WEST HWY
SILVER SPRING MD 20910-3282
Tel : (301)713-3078 x181
E-mail : Charles.Ehler@noaa.gov

Dr. Simon Cripps,
Director, Endangered Seas Progr.,
WWF International,
Avenue du Mont-Blanc,
1196 Gland, Switzerland.
Tel: +41 22 364 9032
E-mail: scripps@wwf.org

Mr. Scott E. Smith
Senior Policy Advisor, External Affairs and
the Marine Initiative The Nature
Conservancy 4245 N. Fairfax Drive,
Arlington, VA 22203
Tel : (703) 841-8175

The role of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in conserving marine biodiversity

(Agenda item 5.2)

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice established the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPA) to implement its programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity. The Report of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) identifies MCPAs as an essential tool to conserving marine biodiversity, especially when used in concert with integrated ocean and coastal management and sustainable fisheries management.

The AHTEG's MCPA recommendations chart a new course for government planners and MCPA practitioners and make an essential contribution to fulfilling the objectives and targets established at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in September 2002.

IUCN, WWF and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) welcome the AHTEG recommendation to establish a global goal and role for MCPAs in the conservation of marine biodiversity, which is consistent with the commitments made by governments at WSSD. IUCN, and WWF believe that conserving the full range of marine biodiversity will require meeting the following objectives: Representation of all ecosystems, habitats, species and community types; maintaining the ecological and evolutionary process that sustain biodiversity; maintaining viable populations of species, particularly those with vulnerable life-histories including highly migratory species; and maintaining resilience in the face of disturbances and large-scale dynamics such as climate change. We concur with the AHTEG that MCPAs and MCPA networks are a powerful tool both for meeting all these biodiversity objectives and for ensuring sustainable and equitable marine resource/marine management. It will

contribute to fulfilling the commitments and new political imperatives created by the WSSD to:

- ❖ Establish representative MCPA networks by 2012;
- ❖ Maintain or restore stocks to sustainable levels by 2015;
- ❖ Halt the loss of marine biodiversity, including coral reefs and wetlands;
- ❖ Protect biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- ❖ Apply the ecosystem approach by 2010;
- ❖ Promote integrated, multidisciplinary and multisectoral coastal and ocean management at the national level; and
- ❖ Provide support, including for capacity-building, for the development and further implementation of Small Island Developing States.

IUCN first identified the need for a global representative system fifteen years ago in 1988 at its General Assembly Resolution.

IUCN, WWF and TNC call upon SBSTTA to recommend that COP7:

- ✓ Approve the proposed CBD goal to create an effectively managed, ecologically representative global system of marine and coastal protected area networks;
- ✓ Incorporate the WSSD timetable to create regional representative networks as the CBD target to achieve this goal, and develop a strategy to meet this goal, including indicators of progress;
- ✓ Apply MCPAs as policy tools with other tools, such as sustainable fisheries management and integrated ocean and coastal management, to fully conserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity; and
- ✓ Promote the design and management of MCPA networks to incorporate and enhance natural resilience mechanisms into management (e.g., identify and protect areas that are naturally resistant to coral bleaching, protect spawning aggregations, adapt management tools to changing species and habitat distribution)

APPLY MCPA NETWORKS AS ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

IUCN, WWF and TNC welcome AHTEG's national framework for MCPAs that includes balanced roles for highly protected areas, multiple use MCPAs, and integrated ocean and coastal management.

We agree with the finding of the AHTWG that MCPAs provide a range of benefits and note in particular the large body of scientific evidence that has emerged on the fisheries benefits of MCPAs in recent years, while recognizing that further research is warranted. Highly protected areas, when used as part of networks of MCPAs including multiple use areas and integrated ocean and coastal management, are an essential tool for restoring and maintaining ecosystem integrity.

Moreover, MCPAs play an important role in supporting local human communities and national sustainable development, in addition to conserving marine and coastal biodiversity. Through protection of marine species and habitats, MCPAs provide social and economic benefits, including sustainable recreational and commercial use of marine resources and enhanced research and educational opportunities. MCPA networks can help individual protected areas achieve conservation goals, providing additional social and economic benefits.

MCPAs are key tools of integrated ocean and coastal management, along with other tools such as watershed management, proper coastal and sea use siting/zoning, and fisheries management, to minimize negative human impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity.

Lastly, MCPA institutional capacity must be strengthened for ocean governance and management. In addition, performance evaluation of management effectiveness plays a critical role in providing for and demonstrating long-term positive impacts on biodiversity and the human communities that depend on these resources. Evaluating management effectiveness should ultimately lead to improved project planning, accountability and adaptive management.

IUCN, WWF and TNC welcome AHTEG's call for identifying the best indicators for assessing management effectiveness at various scales within an overall MCPA system. The management process involves planning and design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, communication and adaptation. Assessing management effectiveness allows for the improved MCPA implementation through learning and adaptation, and the diagnosis of specific issues influencing the success of a protected area in achieving its goals and objectives. Such processes should include stakeholders who are involved in the use of the MPCA, since have an impact on the degree of conservation success achieved.

IUCN, WWF and TNC call upon SBSTTA to recommend that COP 7:

- ✓ Recognize that there are some benefits to marine and coastal biodiversity which can only be provided with any degree of certainty by highly protected areas of sufficient size;
- ✓ Request the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Implementation of Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management to take note of and incorporate the findings of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas;
- ✓ Promote national mechanisms for integrated ocean and coastal management, ensuring representation of MCPA interests, their consultation in the decision-making processes, and involvement in other activities related to coastal area and ocean management planning and development;
- ✓ Encourage the implementation of MCPAs as exemplary systems of integrated ocean and coastal zone management in order to:
 - ❖ Understand dynamics of natural ecosystem functions and human impacts on them;
 - ❖ Ensure protection at ecosystem scale;
 - ❖ Maximize benefits to local human communities;
 - ❖ Minimize negative impacts of other marine and coastal uses on the conservation objectives of the MCPA; and

- ❖ Understand and implement best management practices;
- ❖ Explore further the potential role of non-formal options such as community-based MCPAs, locally-managed marine areas, and traditional marine tenure as part of national networks, how they can better contribute to biodiversity conservation.
- ❖ Support the development of methods to assess management effectiveness at site and national system levels and encourage development of effectiveness indicators for MCPAs that assess the full range of biological, socio-economic and governance goals; and
- ❖ Foster mechanisms to strengthen national capacity to establish MCPAs and national MCPA networks.

PROTECT MARINE BIODIVERSITY IN HIGH SEAS AREAS

IUCN, WWF and TNC welcome the recommendations of the AHTEG Report on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas for further action to develop the global system of MCPA networks to encompass areas beyond national jurisdiction. This is a critical step towards implementing the call for action to protect high seas biodiversity and productivity and to establish representative systems of MCPAs by 2012 agreed at both the World Summit on Sustainable Development (September 2002) and the United Nations General Assembly (December 2002).

In January 2003, IUCN and WWF convened an international workshop in Malaga, Spain to develop an action plan for accelerating the development of MCPAs to protect biodiversity and productivity beyond national jurisdiction compatible with the overarching framework of UNCLOS and associated global and regional agreements.

IUCN, WWF and TNC call upon SBSTTA to recommend that COP 7:

- ✓ Request the CBD Executive Secretary to work with other international bodies, particularly the United

Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the International Seabed Authority, the International Maritime Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and other relevant organizations, to identify appropriate mechanisms and responsibility for addressing these gaps in protection of marine biodiversity on the high seas, and report on this finding to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

- ✓ Agree that there is an urgent need to establish further MCPAs in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including in relation to areas of seamounts, hydrothermal vents, cold water corals and open ocean;
- ✓ Encourage urgent protection of seamounts, cold water corals and other vulnerable underwater features through MCPAs as well as through other global mechanisms; and
- ✓ Promote a framework for the establishment of high seas marine protected areas, based for example on models of regional agreements that already foresee the establishment of MCPAs beyond national jurisdiction, such as in the Mediterranean, the North East Atlantic, or Antarctica.

ENDORSE RESEARCH AND MONITORING PRIORITIES

IUCN, WWF and TNC welcome the elaboration of a research agenda to strengthen individual MPCA management capacity as well as to support the achievement of national and regionally representative MPCA networks.

IUCN, WWF and TNC call upon SBSTTA to recommend that COP 7:

- ✓ Endorse the proposed research priorities;
- ✓ Encourage incorporation of additional research priorities:
 - ❖ Assess the effectiveness of MCPAs in restoring

- ❖ Assess the socio-economic costs and benefits of MCPAs, investigate measures to enhance the equitable sharing of these benefits, and communicate these measures to MPCA practitioners;
- ❖ Develop more specific research and monitoring programmes targeted on tropical, temperate and polar ecosystems;
- ❖ Investigate resilience in marine systems and measures to enhance this through MPCA selection, design, and management; and
- ❖ Develop pilot projects, best practice case studies, and tools to help MPCA managers and planners implement appropriate sustainable finance mechanisms and management approaches for protected areas and MPCA networks.

SUPPORTING THE MCPA AGENDA: IUCN TO CONVENE VTH WORLD PARKS CONGRESS

The Vth World Congress on Protected Areas will transform the WSSD goal to build representative MPCA networks by 2012 into operational tools and programs to build a global system of MCPAs for the future. The Congress will be held in Durban, South Africa, September 8-17, 2003. The goal is to secure the multiple values of the global system of protected areas through the application of our best science, information and experience. WPC will explore and propose new and innovative policies, strategies, and practices for adapting these areas to a world of rapid change, and will develop the marine conservation agenda for the next decade. Some products which support the proposed MPCA agenda outlined by the AHTEG include:

- ❖ a guidebook on management performance indicators for evaluating MPCA effectiveness prepared by WWF and IUCN;
- ❖ a toolkit and training guide for MPCA sustainable finance mechanisms prepared by the Conservation Finance Alliance;
- ❖ a “tool kit” to help MPCA practitioners incorporate into MPCA selection, design, and

management factors that will allow MCPA networks to be more resilient to global change, prepared by TNC and partners;

- ❖ supplemental guidelines to address coral bleaching in the selection, design, and management of MCPAs; and
- ❖ a strategy to address conservation of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.